

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5424

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BERLIN 06855

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: APER, PDIP, PFOR, GE, US (BOLEN, DAVID)
SUBJECT: INITIAL CALL ON GDR FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER

REF: STATE 196718

SUMMARY: DURING MY INITIAL CALL AUGUST 19, FOREIGN
MINISTER FISCHER STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE THE GDR
ATTACHES TO GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE US AND THEIR DESIRE TO
MOVE AHEAD. HE NOTED THE PROPOSALS OUTLINED IN THEIR MAY
12 AIDE MEMOIRE WERE STILL TOPICAL AND AWAITED IMPLEMENTA-
TION. I EXPRESSED OUR DESIRE TO DEVELOP BETTER RELATIONS
WITH THE GDR, POINTING OUT OUR INTEREST IN THE PROMPT
RESOLUTION OF HUMANITARIAN CASES. I SAID WE HOPED ALSO TO
MAKE PROGRESS ON CLAIMS MATTERS, AND SUGGESTED COMPETENT
OFFICIALS ON BOTH SIDES SHOULD MEET FOR DISCUSSIONS ON THE
PRINCIPLES/PROCEDURES THEIR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS
FOLLOW. I NOTED IT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO GOOD RELATIONS
IF TALKS ON JEWISH MATERIAL CLAIMS COULD BE RESUMED. I
ALSO OUTLINED THE IMPORTANCE TO US OF A CONSULAR
CONVENTION AND INDICATED HOW I THOUGHT A COMPROMISE
SOLUTION COULD BE ARRIVED AT ON THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES OF
NATIONALITY. I INDICATED THE SECRETARY WAS PREPARED TO
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SEE HIM AT THE UNGA THIS FALL IF THEIR SCHEDULES PERMITTED.

FISCHER WELCOMED THE POSSIBILITY OF MEETING THE SECRETARY,
AND HIS RESPONSE ON THE CONSULAR CONVENTION WAS POSITIVE,
IF GENERAL. HE SAID THEY WERE PREPARED TO LOOK INTO THE
IDEA IMMEDIATELY AND SUGGESTED THAT SENIOR-LEVEL EMBASSY
OFFICIALS RATHER THAN SPECIALISTS SHOULD MEET ON THE MATTER.

HE WAS ALSO FORTHCOMING ON THE MATTER OF CLAIMS IN GENERAL, AND SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF HOW THINGS COULD BE MOVED FORWARD ON JEWISH MATERIAL CLAIMS TALKS.

MY INITIAL IMPRESSION IS A FAVORABLE ONE. I FOUND FISCHER MORE FORTHCOMING THAN ANTICIPATED. MY CALL MONDAY, AUG. 22, ON HONECKER PRESUMABLY WILL PROVIDE FURTHER INSIGHTS INTO HOW RECEPTIVE THE GDR IS TO THE POINTS I RAISED. FINALLY, IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT FISCHER RECEIVED ME ONE DAY AFTER MY ARRIVAL AND THAT HONECKER WILL RECEIVE ME ONLY THREE DAYS AFTER MY ARRIVAL. END SUMMARY.

1. FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER RECEIVED ME AUGUST 19 FOR AN INITIAL COURTESY CALL WHICH LASTED APPROXIMATELY 45-50 MINUTES. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY AMB. JAHNSOWSKI, CHIEF OF PROTOCOL; DR. GEYER, CHIEF OF THE USA DIVISION OF THE MFA, AND AN INTERPRETER. THE DCM ACCOMPANIED ME. (I CONSIDER IT NOTEWORTHY THAT FISCHER RECEIVED ME ONE DAY AFTER MY ARRIVAL AND THAT HONECKER WILL RECEIVE ME THREE DAYS AFTER ARRIVING.)

2. AFTER INITIAL WELCOMING REMARKS AND PLEASANTRIES, FISCHER SAID THE GDR ATTACHES DUE IMPORTANCE TO RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. THE STATE OF THESE RELATIONS EXCEEDS THE IMPORTANCE OF INTER STATE RELATIONS. IN MAKING SUCH A REMARK, ONE DID NOT NEED TO REFER TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

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HELSINKI FINAL ACT; BUT AFTER HELSINKI, IT WAS OBVIOUS AND APPROPRIATE TO MAKE SUCH A REFERENCE. HE ADDED THAT HE THOUGHT OUR TWO STATES COULD WORK AND COOPERATE TOGETHER IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT. WHAT BOTH SIDES HAVE ACHIEVED IN BILATERAL RELATIONS IS REMARKABLE. IN SAYING SO HE DID NOT MEAN TO SAY THAT IT WAS NOT NECESSARY TO DO MORE. IT IS NECESSARY TO DO MORE BECAUSE THE WEIGHT OF OUR MUTUAL RELATIONS HAD A BEARING THAT GOES BEYOND NORMAL BILATERAL RELATIONS. THIS APPLIES TO ALL FIELDS OF OUR RELATIONS, INCLUDING TRADE, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND CULTURE.

3. FISCHER SAID HE WISHED TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY OF MY CALL TO SAY THE GDR IS READY TO DEVELOP SUCH RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE HOPED I KNEW FROM THE PAPER THEY HAD GIVEN US IN MAY THAT ALL THE ISSUES IN THAT PAPER WERE STILL TOPICAL AND AWAITED IMPLEMENTATION. HE WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF I, AS AMBASSADOR, WOULD DIRECT MY EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT THE PROPOSALS AND OBJECTIVES IN THAT PAPER FOR THE MUTUAL BENEFIT OF OUR COUNTRIES AND OUR PEOPLES. THE GDR INCLUDED IN THAT PAPER ONLY ITEMS AND QUESTIONS WHICH WOULD NOT DO ANY HARM TO THIRD

PARTIES, AND COULD ONLY HELP THEM. FISCHER CONCLUDED HIS OPENING REMARKS BY SAYING THAT WHAT BOTH SIDES CAN DO TO IMPLEMENT THE PROPOSALS IN THE PAPER WOULD BE OF BENEFIT NOT ONLY TO BOTH SIDES, BUT TO OTHERS AS WELL.

4. I RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT HIS REMARKS AND THE IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHED TO THEM WERE RECIPROCATED BY THE UNITED STATES. I AGREED THAT GOOD BILATERAL RELATIONS WERE OF IMPORTANCE AND HAD BROADER IMPLICATIONS. BEFORE COMING TO THE GDR I HAD TALKED WITH A NUMBER OF PEOPLE, INCLUDING AMBASSADORS COOPER AND SIEBER, SENIOR UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE US BUSINESS COMMUNITY, INCLUDING BANKERS.

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SENTATIVES OF THE US BUSINESS COMMUNITY, INCLUDING BANKERS. I WAS AWARE FROM THESE TALKS THAT THERE HAD BEEN A STEP BY STEP DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS. I NOTED THAT WE WELCOME AND ENCOURAGE SUCH DEVELOPMENTS AS THE FISHERIES AGREEMENT, THE ACCESS OF US AND GDR SHIPS TO THE PORTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES, THE RESOLUTION OF HUMANITARIAN CASES OF INTEREST TO US, PROGRESS IN THE TRADE FIELD AS EXEMPLIFIED BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE US-GDR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL, AND THE OPENING OF GDR TRADE OFFICES IN THE UNITED STATES.

5. I NOTED WE HAD AGREED TO BROADEN OUR CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, ADDING THAT THE GDR EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON IS QUITE ACTIVE IN THESE MATTERS. I MENTIONED THE TALKS BETWEEN THE TWO ACADEMIES OF SCIENCE TO OPEN SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION. ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE GROWING RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES WAS THE FORTHCOMING VISIT OF A US SWIM TEAM TO

COMPETE WITH THE GDR SWIM TEAM.

6. I THEN TOLD FISCHER I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK WITH SECRETARY VANCE JUST BEFORE MY DEPARTURE AND INFORMED HIM OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S DESIRE TO MEET AT THE UNGA THIS FALL. I WAS PLEASED TO INFORM FISCHER THAT WHILE THE
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SECRETARY HAS A VERY BUSY SCHEDULE, HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO MEET WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER IF THEIR CALENDARS PERMITTED. IT WAS OUR HOPE THAT MEETINGS OF THIS KIND WOULD LEAD TO GOOD PROGRESS IN OUR RELATIONS.

7. IN THIS CONNECTION I WANTED TO MENTION ITEMS I THOUGHT COULD HELP THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS. I EXPRESSED THANKS FOR THE ACTION THE GDR HAD TAKEN IN THE PAS IN HUMANITARIAN CASES INVOLVING US CITIZENS AND THEIR GDR RELATIVES. THE AMERICAN CONGRESS AND THE PUBLIC WERE VERY INTERESTED IN SUCH CASES AND THE GDR'S ACTION HAD CREATED A FAVORABLE IMPRESSION. I OBSERVED THAT AMERICANS ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO FAMILY AND ETHNIC TIES (AND THAT THERE ARE A LOT OF GERMANS IN THE US) AND THEREFORE WE HOPED, PARTICULARLY IN THOSE EMERGENCY CASES INVOLVING GDR CITIZENS AND THEIR US RELATIVES, THAT THEY COULD BE PROCESSED IN AN EXPEDITIOUS MANNER. MANY OF THESE CASES INVOLVED ELDERLY AND SERIOUSLY ILL PEOPLE. SINCE THESE CASES WERE OF A HUMANITARIAN NATURE, IT IS OUR HOPE THAT THE GDR WOULD PROCESS THEM QUICKLY. SECONDLY, I WISHED TO BRING UP THE MATTER OF A CLAIMS SETTLEMENT, WHERE WE HOPED PROGRESS COULD BE MADE. I SAID I WOULD LIKE TO SEE COMPETENT OFFICIALS OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS MEET TO DISCUSS PROCEDURES FOLLOWED IN THE GDR AND THE US. SUCH A MEETING OR MEETINGS COULD FACILITATE FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS OF A CLAIMS SETTLEMENT. I PROPOSED THEREFORE THAT US OFFICIALS COULD COME HERE OR GDR OFFICIALS COULD GO TO THE US TO WORK OUT PROCEDURES AND PRINCIPLES FOR HANDLING CLAIMS.

9. IN THE SAME GENERAL FIELD, IT WAS OUR HOPE THAT TALKS WITH THE JEWISH MATERIAL CLAIMS CONFERENCE COULD BE RESUMED. THE MERE RESUMPTION OF TALKS WOULD BE VERY
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HELPFUL IN CREATING A GOOD ATMOSPHERE FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS.

10. THIRD, I SAID I WISHED TO STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF A CONSULAR CONVENTION. IN OUR VIEW, A CONSULAR CONVENTION IS A BASIC INGREDIENT FOR GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES. WE WERE OF THE VIEW THAT A CONSULAR CONVENTION IS BASIC FOR THE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS. SINCE WE SEEK GOOD RELATIONS, AND SINCE CONGRESS AND THE US PUBLIC ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO CONSULAR PROTECTION, WE NEED A CONSULAR CONVENTION. I NOTED THAT US AND GDR NEGOTIATORS HAD REACHED AGREEMENT ON MANY OF THE TERMS OF A CONVENTION. THE AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT HAD BEEN NARROWED. WE HAD GIVEN THE GDR A UNIFIED DRAFT OF A CONSULAR CONVENTION MORE THAN A YEAR AGO FOR ITS CONSIDERATION BUT HAD RECEIVED TO DATE NO REACTION.

11. I SAID I WOULD LIKE TO WORK TOWARD PUTTING THIS ISSUE BEHIND US SO WE COULD WORK TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS IN THIS AS WELL AS IN ALL OTHER AREAS. I HAD GIVEN CONSIDERABLE THOUGHT BEFORE LEAVING WASHINGTON TO THE MATTER OF THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES IN THIS CONSULAR CONVENTION. IT WAS MY VIEW THAT SOME KIND OF COMPROMISE SHOULD BE POSSIBLE. ON THE BASIS OF SOUNDINGS I HAD MADE IN WASHINGTON I THOUGHT THAT THE KIND OF COMPROMISE THAT WOULD BE SALEABLE WOULD BE FOR EACH SIDE, AT THE TIME OF SIGNING A CONVENTION, TO STATE ITS POSITION ON THE ISSUE OF A NATIONALITY CLAUSE. IT WAS MY HOPE THAT THE GDR WOULD GIVE CONSIDERATION TO THIS KIND OF COMPROMISE.

12. I THEN BROUGHT UP THE VAN NORMAN CASE, NOTING HE HAD BEEN ARRESTED ON AUGUST 2 AND THAT WE HAD BEEN INFORMED ABOUT THIS ONLY ON AUG. 9. WE WERE PARTICULARLY CON-

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CERNED BECAUSE WE HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN ACCESS TO HIM AND I EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT WE WOULD HAVE ACCESS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

13. I SAID THESE WERE PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS I WISHED TO SHARE WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER, ADDING THAT DURING MY CALL ON CHIEF OF STATE HONECKER I MIGHT WANT TO ENLARGE ON SOME OF THE POINTS I HAD MADE AND PERHAPS RAISE OTHER ITEMS AS WELL.

14. FISCHER RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT OF COURSE I WAS FREE TO RAISE WHATEVER I WISHED TO WITH MR. HONECKER. HE NOTED THAT HE THOUGHT MR. HONECKER WOULD WISH TO HAVE MY VIEWS ON WHAT DIRECTION I THOUGHT OUR RELATIONS COULD GO. AT THE SAME TIME HE THOUGHT THAT ONE SHOULD NOT BE TOO DETAILED IN THE FIRST MEETING WITH MR. HONECKER.

15. FISCHER EXPRESSED SATISFACTION AT THE IDEAS I HAD RAISED, COMMENTING HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT I WOULD NOT BE WITHOUT WORK IN THE GDR. HE LOOKED FORWARD TO THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH THE SECRETARY. HE PROPOSED IN THIS REGARD THAT A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GDR UN MISSION COULD CONTACT USUN TO ARRANGE AN ACCEPTABLE DATE. HE DID NOT THINK THIS WOULD BE DIFFICULT AND THAT A MEETING COULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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ARRANGED QUICKLY. SUCH A MEETING, IN HIS VIEW, WOULD HAVE WEIGHT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS. IT WAS SAFE TO ASSUME, HE WENT ON, THAT SUCH A MEETING WOULD NOT BE THE CLIMAX OF OUR RELATIONS. CONTACTS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS WERE IMPORTANT FOR GOOD RELATIONS AND HE STRESSED THE GDR WAS READY TO DO ITS SHARE.

16. WITH RESPECT TO "SO-CALLED" HUMANITARIAN CASES, FISCHER SAID THE POSITION OF THE GDR WAS WELL KNOWN AND THAT IS ONE OF PRINCIPLE. HE SAID THE GDR WOULD COME TO GRIPS WITH SUCH PROBLEMS IN THE FUTURE AS THEY HAD IN THE PAST. HE DID NOT SEE ANYTHING IN THIS AREA THAT SHOULD BURDEN OUR RELATIONS, ADDING THAT HE WAS NOT REFERRING TO ANY SPECIFIC CASES. HE CLAIMED HE DID NOT HAVE ANY DETAILS ON THE SPECIFIC CASE (VAN NORMAN) I HAD MENTIONED. NOTING THAT NO ONE IS ARRESTED JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT IN THE GDR, HE SAID WE WOULD BE ABLE TO HAVE CONTACT WITH THE PRISONER.

17. CONCERNING CLAIMS, HE SAID MY SUGGESTION WAS ACCEPTABLE. THE GDR AGREED THAT BOTH SIDES SHOULD FORESEE WHAT CAN BE DONE TO MOVE MATTERS FORWARD AND WHAT THE BEST WAY WOULD BE IN ORDER TO AVOID ENDLESS NEGOTIATIONS. THEIR AIM

WAS TO COME TO AN EARLY CONCLUSION. THE GDR WAS READY FOR CONTACT. HE WOULD NOTE ONLY THAT, BECAUSE OF THE EARLIER "DIPLOMATIC BLOCKADE", THE GDR WAS CONDUCTING A NUMBER OF CLAIMS NEGOTIATIONS SIMULTANEOUSLY. IT THEREFORE HAS CERTAIN PHYSICAL LIMITS IN TERMS OF THE SPECIALISTS IT HAS AVAILABLE. BUT HE ADDED THEY WERE READY TO GO TO THE "EXTREME" IN THIS AREA.

18. WITH RESPECT TO JEWISH MATERIAL CLAIMS, FISCHER SAID PERHAPS THERE WAS SOME MISUNDERSTANDING. THE GDR HAD NOT
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BROKEN OFF CONTACT WITH THE JEWISH MATERIAL CLAIMS ORGANIZATION. ON THE BASIS OF WHAT I HAD SAID, HE WOULD SEE WHAT COULD BE DONE TO MOVE THINGS FORWARD.

19. WITH RESPECT TO THE CONSULAR CONVENTION, FISCHER AGREED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT. IT AFFECTS THE CITIZENS OF BOTH COUNTRIES, AND PRACTICAL PROBLEMS WHICH ARISE CAN BE EASED THROUGH THE EXISTENCE OF A CONSULAR CONVENTION. ON THE QUESTION OF CITIZENSHIP, FISCHER SAID HE WISHED TO TELL ME HOW HE SEES THIS ISSUE. THERE ARE NO STATES WITHOUT CITIZENS. WITH RESPECT TO THE CITIZENS OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES HE SAW NO PROBLEMS. THE GDR HAD NO CLAIMS ON ANYONE ELSE AND HE ASSUMED THE SAME THING APPLIED TO THE US.

20. WITH RESPECT TO THE APPROACH I HAD SUGGESTED FOR A COMPROMISE SOLUTION, HE SAID HE WOULD THINK IT OVER AND WOULD COME BACK TO IT. HE THEN SUGGESTED THAT, RATHER THAN HAVE THE MATTER GO INTO THE REGULAR CHANNEL OF SPECIALISTS DISCUSSING THINGS, WE SHOULD TRY TO DO IT DIRECTLY THROUGH ME OR THROUGH A MEMBER OF THE EMBASSY STAFF I MIGHT DESIGNATE, OR THAT IT MIGHT BE DONE THE SAME WAY IN WASHINGTON. HE SAID SUCH AN APPROACH WOULD AVOID THE PROBLEM OF HAVING SPECIALISTS TRAVEL BACK AND FORTH. WHAT WE SHOULD TRY TO DO IS TO CONQUER THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES AND THEN THE TWO DELEGATIONS COULD COME TOGETHER TO AGREE AND SIGN THE CONVENTION. HE SAID THE GDR SIDE WAS READY TO START IMMEDIATELY AND COMPLETE THE WORK WITHOUT DELAY. THEY WERE PLEASED TO COOPERATE, NOTING THAT THIS WOULD MOVE US AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD IN OUR RELATIONS. IF BOTH SIDES WORKED IN THE SPIRIT OF OUR FIRST MEETING, WE COULD ACHIEVE IMPORTANT PROGRESS IN OUR RELATIONS.

21. I TOLD FISCHER I APPRECIATED HIS FORTHCOMING REMARKS

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AND SAID I WOULD WORK TO MOVE OUR RELATIONS FORWARD, PARTICULARLY IN THE THREE AREAS I HAD MENTIONED. I HAD NOT EARLIER MENTIONED TRADE, WHERE I THOUGHT IT WAS ALSO POSSIBLE TO MOVE FORWARD. MUCH HAD BEEN DONE IN THE PAST. WE HAD A GOOD TRADE IN GRAIN AND I ASSURED HIM WE WISHED TO REMAIN A RELIABLE SUPPLIER. I NOTED ALSO THAT AS A RESULT OF MY TALKS WITH BUSINESS FIRMS I KNEW A NUMBER WISHED TO JOIN THE TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL AND THAT BANKERS HAVE THE GDR IN MIND. FOR OUR PART, WE WERE PREPARED TO REVIEW REQUESTS BY OTHER GDR TRADE ORGANIZATIONS TO OPEN OFFICES IN THE US.

22. IN THE CULTURAL FIELD, I SAID WE WANTED MORE EXCHANGES. MUCH HAS BEEN DONE ON A PRIVATE LEVEL, AND IT WAS OUR VIEW THAT MORE COULD BE DONE IN THIS GENERAL AREA. WE REGRETTED THAT THE PROPOSALS WE HAD MADE FOR 1977 HAD NOT YET BEEN REALIZED AND IT WAS OUR HOPE THESE COULD TAKE PLACE IN 1978. I SUGGESTED THAT BOTH SIDES MIGHT THINK ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF CONCLUDING A CULTURAL AGREEMENT AS A WAY OF FORMALIZING OUR RELATIONS IN THIS AREA. I CLOSED BY SAYING IT WAS A GREAT PLEASURE FOR ME TO MEET WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND TO GIVE HIM MY VIEWS ON THOSE AREAS WHERE I THOUGHT WE COULD WORK TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE OUR RELATIONS.
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23. FISCHER SAID OUR EFFORTS COINCIDED. HE SAID A PRACTICAL SUGGESTION, WHICH HE FOUND MOST APPROPRIATE, WOULD BE THAT THE TWO OF US SHOULD MEET PERIODICALLY TO DRAW UP A

BALANCE, TO SEE HOW FAR WE HAD PROGRESSED, AND TO PROVIDE MOMENTUM WHEREVER THIS MIGHT BE IN THE INTEREST OF OUR RELATIONS. THE ONLY PREREQUISITE FOR SUCH MEETINGS WOULD BE THAT OUR EFFORTS SHOULD BE AIMED AT MOVING THINGS AHEAD.

24. I RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT I WAS CONFIDENT ONCE WE HAD A CONSULAR CONVENTION WE COULD MOVE AHEAD IN OTHER AREAS

25. MY INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF THIS FIRST MEETING WITH FISCHER IS THAT HE WAS MORE FORTHCOMING THAN ANTICIPATED. HE RESPONDED FAVORABLY, IF IN GENERAL TERMS, TO MY REMARKS, PARTICULARLY ON THE CONSULAR CONVENTION ISSUE AND ON CLAIMS. ON THE KEY ISSUE OF A COMPROMISE SOLUTION TO THE CONSULAR CONVENTION, I CONSIDER IT A POSITIVE SIGN THAT HE SAID (1) THEY WERE READY TO START IMMEDIATELY TO WORK TO COMPLETE A CONVENTION WITHOUT DELAY AND THAT (2) SENIOR-LEVEL EMBASSY OFFICIALS ON BOTH SIDES RATHER THAN SPECIALISTS SHOULD ENGAGE THEMSELVES IN THIS EFFORT. WITH RESPECT TO CLAIMS, FISCHER MOVED AWAY FROM THE EARLIER GDR POSITION OF IGNORING THE IDEA OF PRELIMINARY TALKS ON CLAIMS PROCEDURES/PRINCIPLES BEFORE THE START OF ACTUAL NEGOTIATIONS. THEY AT LEAST SEEM PREPARED NOW TO SIT DOWN TO SEE WHAT CAN BE DONE TO FACILITATE MOVEMENT TOWARD EVENTUAL FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS. I THINK IT IS ALSO A POTENTIALLY GOOD SIGN THAT HE DID NOT SAY, WITH RESPECT TO JEWISH CLAIMS, THAT THE GDR HAD MADE AN OFFER WHICH WAS REJECTED AND THEREFORE THEY HAD NOTHING MORE TO SAY ON THE ISSUE. WITH RESPECT TO THE GDR HANDLING OF HUMANITARIAN CASES OF INTEREST
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TO THE US, I DO NOT THINK FISCHER COULD HAVE SAID ANYTHING MORE IN TERMS OF COMMITTING HIMSELF TO THE PROMPT, FAVORABLE RESOLUTION OF CASES. I AM SCHEDULED TO PRESENT MY CREDENTIALS TO HONECKER AT 1100 ON AUGUST 22. FISCHER WILL HAVE BRIEFED HIM ON OUR MEETING, AND IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE CALL ON HONECKER WILL PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS INTO HOW FAR THEY WISH TO PROCEED ON OUR RELATIONS, AND ON THE CONSULAR CONVENTION AND ON CLAIMS IN PARTICULAR. DEPENDING ON HONECKER'S REMARKS, I WILL HAVE SOME SUGGESTIONS ON HOW WE MIGHT WISH TO TRY TO MOVE THINGS AHEAD. FOR EXAMPLE, HE MIGHT WANT TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN PRESENTING THE GDR WITH AN OUTLINE OF THE SUBJECTS CLAIMS SPECIALISTS COULD DISCUSS AT AN INITIAL MEETING. BOLEN

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